

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PHNOM 09201 010736Z

10

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 L-02 OMB-01 RSR-01 /056 W

----- 117002

R 010615Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2816

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 9201

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CB

SUBJ: FAREWELL CALLS ON LON NOL, SIRIK MATAK, AND CHENG HENG

1. DURING MY FAREWELL CALLS AUGUST 31 ON CHENG HENG  
AND SEPTEMBER 1 ON SIRIK MATAK AND LON NOL I EMPHASIZED  
THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING POLITICAL SOLIDARITY IN

THE WEEKS AND MONTHS AHEAD AND SUGGESTED THAT THE HIGH  
POLITICAL COUNCIL BE CONTINUED FOR ANOTHER SIX MONTHS  
WHEN ITS PRESENT MANDATE EXPIRES IN LATE OCTOBER. I  
POINTED OUT THAT WHATEVER WEAKNESSES THE COUNCIL MAY  
HAVE AS AN OPERATING MECHANISM IT IS AN IMPORTANT SYMBOL  
OF POLITICAL SOLIDARITY ABROAD AND AT HOME AND SHOULD  
NOT BE ABANDONED.

2. CHENG HENG EXPRESSED FULL AGREEMENT WITH THIS POSITION.  
SIRIK MATAK ALSO INDICATED AWARENESS OF THE SYMBOLIC  
VALUE OF THE COUNCIL, ALTHOUGH HE AGAIN EXPRESSED SOME  
DOUBT AS TO WHETHER THE IN TAM GOVERNMENT CAN BE OF LONG  
DURATION. IF GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES SHOULD OCCUR, SIRIK

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MATAK BELIEVES IT DESIRABLE THAT IN TAM CONTINUE AS A

MEMBER OF THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL AND COMMENTED THAT HE THOUGHT IN TAM WOULD HIMSELF PERCEIVE THIS TO BE IN HIS OWN POLITICAL INTERESTS.

3. OF THE THREE, LON NOL'S ATTITUDE CONCERNING EXTENDING THE TENURE OF THE COUNCIL WAS THE MOST RESERVED, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF EITHER FOR OR AGAINST THIS ACTION. SINCE THE MARSHAL HAS ALWAYS VIEWED THE COUNCIL AS IMPINGING ON HIS OWN PREROGATIVES AND AUTHORITY AS PRESIDENT, HIS ATTITUDE IS UNDERSTANDABLE. I PARTICULARLY WISHED TO MAKE THE POINT TO HIM OF OUR STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE COUNCIL TO LAY THE GROUND FOR THE FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS WHICH MAY HAVE TO BE MADE TO HIM ON THIS SUBJECT BY CHARGE ENDERS OR MY SUCCESSOR.

4. I FOUND ALL THREE MEN IN A REASONABLY CONFIDENT FRAME OF MIND DESPITE THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION AT KOMPONG CHAM. AS IN OTHER RECENT MEETINGS, LON NOL SEEMED PREOCCUPIED WITH THE THOUGHT THAT THE REPUBLIC ALONE IS NOW STANDING UP TO HANOI AND IS NOT RECEIVING THE SUPPORT HE FEELS IT SHOULD FROM SUCH NEIGHBORS AS SOUTH VIETNAM AND THAILAND. TO MITIGATE HIS CONCERN I RECALLED TO HIM THE PRESIDENT'S AND DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S RECENT WARNINGS TO HANOI AND REMINDED HIM THAT IF A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE AREA DEVELOPS CONGRESS WILL BE ASKED TO GIVE THE PRESIDENT THE AUTHORITY HE NEEDS TO COUNTER IT.  
SWANK

SECRET

NNN

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